Obituary

BRUCE HOSEGOOD BURNS, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Hollymoor Hospital, Northfield, Birmingham

Dr Bruce Burns died on 26 September 1986 after a short illness at the age of 54. Born in Bristol in 1931, he was educated at the City of Norwich School and graduated in medicine from Bristol University Medical School in 1956. In the early days of his career he was interested in obstetrics and gynaecology and obtained the D(Obst)RCOG qualification in 1959. However, after having fulfilled his National Service obligation as clinical officer in obstetrics he commenced psychiatric training as registrar at Barrow and Glenside Hospitals, Bristol and was later senior registrar in the University Department of Psychiatry in Manchester.

He was appointed consultant psychiatrist at Hollymoor Hospital, Birmingham in 1968 and thereafter worked at that hospital, and later also at the Lyndon Clinic in Solihull, where he fulfilled the duties of Medical Director for many years. He soon gained a high reputation for his excellence as a clinician and as an extremely able and enthusiastic teacher whose skills were enhanced by an extensive and authoritative knowledge of the literature. He was for many years postgraduate clinical tutor at his hospital and his contribution to its academic and teaching activities were held in great respect and esteem by his colleagues.

Bruce was active in research and in contributing to the literature of his speciality throughout his career. He was awarded the doctorate in medicine by Bristol University in 1967 for work on psychogenic breathlessness, and other research interests were concerned with sedation threshold, evaluation of new antidepressant drugs, and with lithium prophylactic therapy in the management of affective disorder.

An active and valued involvement with the administrative aspect of the service was reflected in his membership of many local and regional medical committees. During 1976 he was president of the psychiatric section of Birmingham Medical Institute. He was elected to Fellowship of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1986.

Bruce was always ready to share his extensive knowledge of the specialty with his junior colleagues, and he will be remembered with gratitude by the many psychiatrists he helped to train. His colleagues will treasure the memory of a dedicated, learned and caring doctor whose high reputation was justly deserved. He had the gift of inspiring friendship, affection and goodwill, and his enthusiasm and commitment were an inspiration to those associated with him. These qualities won him a wide circle of friends who will grieve over the loss of a loyal and generous companion. He is survived by his wife, Lynn, and the daughter and three sons of his first marriage.

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